

Putting the Focus on Public Health Nurses

As of March 16, 2010

Health Objective: 23-10 Continuing education and training

Block Grant Funding: 75-99% - Primary source of funding

Issue:

As the Education and Training Manager at the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH), Jessica Trimble recognized that there was no division at the ISDH nor comprehensive program that focused on continuing education for public health nurses working at the 93 local health departments (LHD) in the state of Indiana. The public health nurses are responsible for a myriad of public health activities including outbreak investigations, preparedness activities, planning and conducting immunization campaigns, tobacco cessation activities, well baby checks, STD/HIV screenings, lead remediation, and other pandemics and emergencies as they arise in their communities. Many health departments do not have the funding to send staff to continuing education opportunities. Attending these activities is imperative to train new staff and keep veterans abreast of current trends in public health.

Intervention:

The Indiana State Department of Health is working to keep the public health nurse work force educated and prepared to protect the citizens of the state of Indiana. Thanks to an investment of \$5,000 from the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant, the Indiana State Department of Health was able to provide a one and a half day conference.¹ The conference offered 6 two-hour workshops, 15 one-hour sessions, and three plenary sessions presented by CDC and ISDH staff. In addition, ISDH coordinated and staffed the conference.

Impact:

- The data collected from the evaluations from the public health nurse conference created a new initiative at the ISDH. A need for additional regional public health nurse meetings in Indiana was identified. Currently, there are 3 regional nurse groups meeting regularly that incorporate 30 LHDs. The goal is to increase to 10 regional nurse groups in 2010 and engage 60 LHDs.
- The evaluations from the 2009 public health nurse conference have helped to determine the direction for the 2010 public health nurse conference. Based on participant feedback, the Immunization Division at the ISDH has merged their annual conference with the annual public health nurse conference for 2010 in order to better meet the needs of the public health nurses in Indiana.
- Based on the success of the 2009 public health nurse conference, the 2010 conference is being planned for 250 attendees and the content was determined by public health nurses based on their evaluations from the 2009 conference and the attendees of regional public health nurse meetings.

Success Story Contact Information:

Jessica Trimble, MA

Indiana State Department of Health - Local Health Department Outreach Office

2 N. Meridian Street, Section 2D, Indianapolis, IN 46204 (317) 234-6623; (317) 233-7761 (fax)

jtrimble@isdh.gov

Block Grant Coordinator Information:**Indiana State Department of Health**

Dawn Adams, PHHS Block Grant Coordinator

2 N. Meridian St

Indianapolis, IN 46204

Phone: 317-233-7679

E-mail: dawadams@isdh.in.gov

Web site: <http://www.in.gov/isdh/>

Footnotes:

1The Public Health Nurse Conference was held on May 28-May 29, 2009. 172 public health nurses were in attendance.

Quote:**Photo and Release Filenames:**

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